




Why Involve Volunteers in the Library?

- Develop a Group of Strong Supporters*
- Enhance Services*
- Gain Community Connections*
- Access to Specialized Skills*
- Diversity*
- Free up Staff Time*
- New Energy & Ideas*
- They Give More*



Long Overdue: A Fresh Look at Public Attitudes About Libraries in the 21st Century

*A Report by Public Agenda supported by Americans for Libraries Council
and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2006*

-  *Americans who are active in the community and vote regularly are more likely to have a library card and favor taxes to support libraries.*
-  *These are also the people that local politicians are most likely to listen to.*
-  *However, these highly engaged citizens are generally unaware of funding issues that threaten library services.*

How Are Boomer Volunteers Different from Senior Volunteers?

- ✎ 4 out of 5 expect to work well into what used to be considered retirement years*
- ✎ Enhanced physical ability compared with retirees 20 years ago*
- ✎ Highly skilled -- most have been in workforce*
- ✎ View retirement very differently -- believe some of their most important contributions lie ahead ("patron saint" is Jimmy Carter)*
- ✎ Different perception of aging -- 50 is the new 30 -- don't call us "Seniors," "Retirees," "Elderly" or "Older Adults!"*



More About Boomer Volunteers

Reinventing Aging: Baby Boomers and Civic Engagement, Harvard School of Public Health, 2004

 ***Because They Are:***  ***Boomers Expect:***


 ***Activists***


 ***Opportunities that
inspire***

 ***Consumers***

 ***An abundance of
volunteer options***

 ***Workers***

 ***Professionally
managed volunteer
programs***





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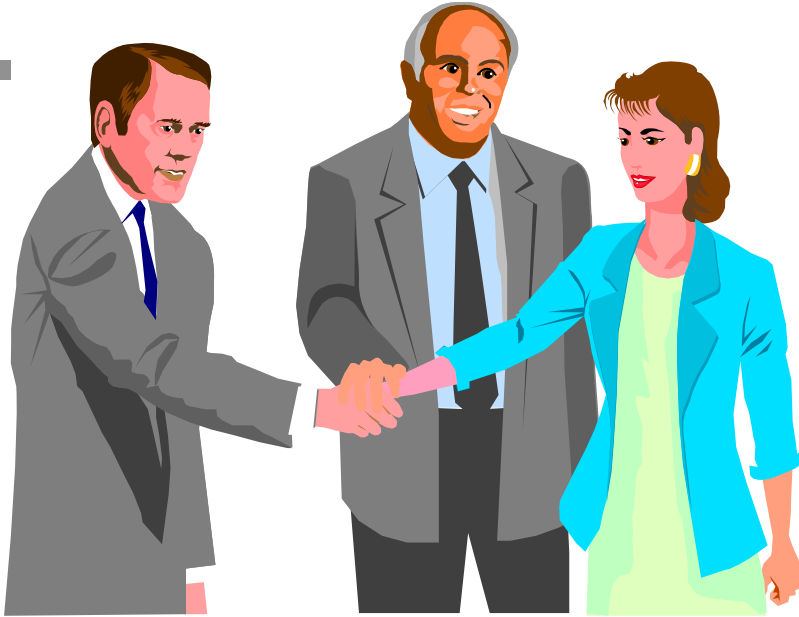
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So How Do We Attract Baby Boomers as Volunteers?



- ☞ Offer **choice, and flexibility**
- ☞ Offer **meaningful** work that **inspires**
- ☞ Provide opportunities to **share their skills**
- ☞ Develop **career paths** for volunteers.
- ☞ Provide “**try-before-you-buy**” **opportunities** -- this generation looks for quality, efficiency and effectiveness.
- ☞ Provide **clear expectations** of time, tasks and training.

What Keeps Boomers Volunteering?

- ✎ *Retention rate is higher for those performing professional or management volunteer activities*
- ✎ *Boomer volunteers who do general labor and supply transportation have lower retention rates.*
- ✎ *The more hours a boomer volunteers, the more likely s/he will stay*

Success Elements for Volunteer Programs

- ☞ *Meaningful Written Job Descriptions*
- ☞ *Targeted Recruitment*
- ☞ *Clear Expectations in Screening*
- ☞ *Orientation/Training*
- ☞ *Supportive Climate*
- ☞ *Supervision/Feedback*
- ☞ *Recognition*

